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News Release ~ Communiqué

Historic Waterways open for 1995 season

CORNWALL, Ontario, May 18, 1995 - The 1995 navigation season on the Rideau Canal and the Trent-Severn Waterway will begin on Friday, May 19, the Department of Canadian Heritage announced today.

Operated by Parks Canada, the historic canals provide recreational boaters with access to some of the most popular vacation areas within the province.

The Rideau Canal allows boaters to travel from Kingston on Lake Ontario to the Nation's Capital, while the Trent-Severn Waterway affords access to the many lakes and rivers between Trenton on Lake Ontario and Port Severn on Georgian Bay. This is a special year for the Trent-Severn in that 1995 marks the 75th Anniversary of through navigation on the system.

The Department of Canadian Heritage is committed to the commemoration, protection and recreational use of these historic waterways. Boaters should note that due to mechanical problems with the 100 ton carriage at the Big Chute Marine Railway on the Trent-Severn Waterway, it will not be operating until at least Friday, June 2, 1995. Until the bigger carriage is back in operation, the old 20 ton, 4 foot draught carriage will be operating. Vessels too large for the 20 ton carriage will be unable to obtain passage at Big Chute - Lock 44, until the new 100 ton carriage is back in service.

An average fee increase of 10% as well as new hours of operation will be implemented this year. Fees are still based on boat length and start at $5.75 for a single lockstation lockage permit for a vessel up to 5.5 metres long. The length of the boating season remains the same but hours of operation on weekdays in the spring and fall will be shortened from previous years. The hours of operation differ between the Rideau Canal and the Trent-Severn Waterway and boaters are advised to obtain specific information regarding each.

Lockage, mooring and camping permits are available to boaters at lockstations along the Rideau Canal and the Trent-Severn Waterway. This year's navigation season, on both the Rideau Canal and the Trent-Severn Waterway, will continue until October 11, 1995.

Enclosure :

Backgrounder.

Complete list of fees available on request.

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BACKGROUNDER

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RIDEAU CANAL

The Rideau is the oldest of Canada's nine historic canals and still functions with lockstaff manually operating most of the 47 locks which dot its length. Constructed in the 1830s as a strategic, military transportation route, the Rideau Canal now serves as a recreational waterway welcoming boaters who enjoy the scenic beauty and historic character of its 202 km length. A leisurely trip through the historic locks and along its tranquil lakes and rivers takes approximately 3-5 days.

The Rideau is the oldest fully operational canal in North America. This fact, complemented by the determination of the local residents to maintain its heritage character, has been instrumental in preserving not only the historic structures and manual operation of the canal but also its intrinsic beauty and natural environment.

TRENT-SEVERN WATERWAY

The Trent-Severn Waterway provides the recreational boater with a snapshot of central Ontario history along its 386 km length. Over the course of a week-long trip, the boater encounters some of the nation's engineering marvels, including the highest hydraulic lift lock in the world at Peterborough and a marine railway at Big Chute.

In addition to its main role as a navigation route, the Waterway is also a significant natural resource and has a rich human history. More than 250 marshes, swamps and wetlands exist here and travellers along the corridor experience some of the major physiographic and vegetational regions of Ontario. Over 500 archeological sites illustrate that the Waterway has played an important and continuous role in the evolution and development of native culture.

The Waterway opened for through navigation in 1920, but it all began with a small wooden lock in Bobcaygeon back in 1833. Over the years sections were added as the Waterway gradually connected lakes and rivers from Lake Ontario to Lake Huron.